

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 54

By Matlock

A RESOLUTION to commend Russell Johnson for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Russell Johnson is one such estimable person who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, a former member of this august body, Russell Johnson's illustrious career in the House of Representatives came to an end at the adjournment sine die of the 104th General Assembly, as he announced his retirement from the legislature to pursue election to the office of District Attorney General for the 9th Judicial District; and

WHEREAS, having earned the trust and confidence of the citizens of his district during his tenure as a legislator Russell Johnson was enthusiastically elected to once again serve the people as District Attorney General for the 9th Judicial District, winning an incredible 70% of the votes cast; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Russell Johnson has, for many years, been a prominent and highly influential figure in the political, social, and civic lives of Loudon and Monroe counties, both emerging economic forces in the rapidly growing East Tennessee region; he served his constituents in numerous capacities, always working diligently at his elected duties and expending the necessary effort to understand the opposing sides of complex issues; and

WHEREAS, in November of 2000, the good people of House District 21 in Loudon and Monroe counties evinced their great faith in the political and governmental capabilities of Russell Johnson by electing him as their representative to the General Assembly, a position in which he performed admirably; and

WHEREAS, during his three terms and six years in the House of Representatives, former Representative Johnson was prominent as a dedicated and well-informed legislator who always voted his conscience; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson dedicated his career away from the General Assembly to the practice of law; he is also the co-owner of a title company, and he previously served with probity and acumen as Loudon City Judge from 1998 to 2001; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being a highly respected attorney, Russell Johnson was a dynamic and aggressive participant in the legislative process and earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues for the outstanding contributions he made as Chairman of the Wildlife Subcommittee of the House Conservation and Environment Committee and Chairman of the Criminal Practice and Procedure Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee; and

WHEREAS, an avid outdoorsman and farm owner whose property has prevalent game populations, Russell Johnson promoted youth involvement in outdoor sporting activities and worked to increase awareness of conservation and wildlife issues among the general public during his distinguished tenure as Chairman of the Wildlife Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, he also served as a member of the House Conservation Environment Committee and its Environment Subcommittee, the House Judiciary Committee and its Judicial Administration Subcommittee, the House Rules Committee, the Joint Select Committee on Children and Youth, and the Ad Hoc Committee on Ethics; and

WHEREAS, Russell Johnson is "green" in the best sense of the word and a true friend and stalwart defender of the environment, having distinguished himself in the realm of environmental conservation and preservation through his service with the Natural Resources Task Force of the American Legislative Exchange Council, Foothills Land Conservancy, Creek - N- Woods, Tennessee Conservation Voters, National Environmental Moot Court Team, Sierra Club, Tennessee Tourism Caucus, National Parks and Conservation Association, National Association of Sportsmen Legislators, Tennessee Wildlife Foundation, and Republicans for Environmental Progress; and

WHEREAS, a strong proponent of recycling and protecting the environment, he sponsored legislation to enact a mandatory beverage container deposit program or "bottle bill" in Tennessee even though many considered it a misguided effort; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Russell Johnson has been honored numerous times for his heartfelt, and usually effective, advocacy for the preservation of our natural environment; he was honored as the Legislator Friend of the Environment by Tennessee Conservation Voters in both 2003 and 2004 and was named the Tennessee Wildlife Foundation's Legislator of the Year in 2004; and

WHEREAS, this singular gentleman was honored as Legislator of the Year by the County Officials Association of Tennessee in 2003 and has received the American Jurisprudence Award; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, Mr. Johnson joined other rising political leaders from across the nation in serving as a delegate to the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan during a political study program sponsored by the American Council of Young Political Leaders; and

WHEREAS, he demonstrated his extensive knowledge of government and politics as an election observer in Macedonia with the International Republican Institute in 2004; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman who truly appreciates the responsibilities, as well as the privileges, of citizenship, Russell Johnson is a valuable contributor to many civic, professional, and governmental organizations; he has rendered estimable service as a member of the Ft. Loudoun Historical Association, Tennessee Bar Association, Loudon County Chamber of Commerce, and American Quarter Horse Association and as a board member of the East Tennessee Development District, Loudon County chapter of the American Red Cross, and the Monroe County Chamber of Commerce; he previously served with distinction as President of both the Loudon Rotary Club and the Loudon County Bar Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Religion from Auburn University and received his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the University of Tennessee College of Law; and

WHEREAS, the son of proud parents Dr. Martha Russell Johnson and Lawrence Johnson, he has two sisters: Terry Johnson Sharpe and Laura Johnson Ball; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Russell Johnson is most appreciative of the love and companionship he shares with his wife, Erin, and their pets, Ralph the dog and Dimple the cat; they greatly miss the dearly departed Tucson; and

WHEREAS, Russell Johnson is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby commend Russell Johnson for his honorable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee and for his countless contributions and many good works in service of the citizens of House District 21 and Loudon and Monroe counties.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend to Russell Johnson our best wishes for much success as District Attorney General for the 9th Judicial District and in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.